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ON RETAINING OUR AMATEUR STATUS

By THOMAS J. FEENEY

DAVENPORT, IOWA

When Pancho Gonzales reached the peak in amateur tennis a few months ago, he went professional. When Doctor Middlecoff hit the apex on the golf links, he turned pro. The same temptation beckons to every bird-watcher when his life list hits 100 or more species. The reason is not to make money out of his sport as the others. It is a matter of prestige. He no longer wants to be a bird-watcher but an ornithologist.

Now the chief glory of bird-watching is that it is a hobby, a pastime, and not a science. It is practically unique in its uselessness. Entomologists, or bug-chasers, can so easily get involved in control of corn borers or the study of disease-bearing insects. Rock-hounds have always the hope of a bonanza in a brilliant amethyst of great price or, particularly nowadays, equipped with a portable Geiger counter, of a precious and patriotic strike of pitch-blende. Stamp collectors look toward a find worth a fortune. Only the bird-watcher remains as a complete amateur—the sole proponent of art for art's sake in the world of hobbies.

The bird-watcher seldom hunts with a gun for his table. And whereas they say it costs every hunter an average of over seven dollars for every duck he bags, if one similarly calculated equipment, especially binoculars, clothes, time, and gas, the bird-watcher may invest as much in each new species merely glimpsed and enjoyed by eye and ear, not by palate or pocketbook. The bird-watcher may write up his notes for magazines, but he is happy in his payment not by check but in free copies for his friends. The bird-watcher certainly makes no money from his sport and risks becoming a pariah to his family and regarded as queer by his neighbors.

We resent, therefore, current attempts, constantly growing, to make professionals out of us, ornithologists rather than bird-watchers, pseudo-scientists instead of nature lovers. The attempts are chiefly on the part of our own writers. Almost without exception they are professionals—men who are now earning their keep from what was once their hobby. They are employed by museums, universities, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Audubon Society, state conservation commissions, etc. This is as it should be. Professional ornithologists are necessary, but their number is limited. The rest of us should not pretend to be scientists and should not be encouraged by our writers and editors to consider ourselves as such.

Yet they do, in two different ways. First, by slighting and snide remarks at the amateur. Ludlow Griscom, who is perhaps as kind as any of the pros toward us, defines the amateurs as "people whom I am forced to allude to as amateurs, thanks to the defects of the English language, merely because they do not spend their entire time at it, and are not paid for ornithological research." (Modern Bird Study, p. 10). Then he proceeds to show how unreliable are the findings of the amateurs. Practically every recent book by a recognized expert has its little digs, perhaps unconscious, at us—the amateur will not be able to decide the species in the field; very confusing to the amateur, etc.

This sort of thing goads the bird-watcher into pretending he is an ornithologist. In desperation he makes notations about *Phreuticus ludovicianus* perched on a branch of *taxus canadensis*, with date, wind velocity, temperature, and the middle names of his companions instead of enjoying the glad sight of a Rose-breasted Grosbeak eating ground hemlock berries.

The second way the writers foster the increase of ornithologists and the decline of bird-watchers is by positive encouragement. For instance,

Joseph Hickey, in his very inspirational book for the amateur, "A Guide to Bird Watching," tries to get us into a dither about contributing to science by studying life histories, exact counting of birds, reports to journals. No one can deny that the part-time student and hobbyist in any field does frequently contribute to the common mass of knowledge. But it is questionable how much contribution amateurs make to the science of ornithology compared to the mass of irrelevant material that is poured into our journals.

As a result of such encouragement our magazines are becoming repulsive by overloading with simple facts couched in stilted terms; with articles concerning the longevity of Robins (pardon me, *Turdus migratorius migratorius*) expressed in algebraic formulae; with tables and charts that make the simple lay of the Song Sparrow as complicated as atomic fission. As yet, "Iowa Bird Life" has not succumbed to the disease. May it ever remain healthy.

As I write these lines in the fall, enjoying the Myrtle Warblers, Hermit Thrushes, Sapsucker and White-throated Sparrows as they pass through the yard, I await the arrival of the Golden-eye and Merganser and Bald Eagle. Yet, on what day the Bald Eagle appears and what species (or better yet, subspecies) of fish he may eat during his stay, though I observe it ever so closely, chart it ever so minutely, and report it ever so obscurely, will not, I think, contribute anything to the general knowledge of mankind or change the course of history in any way. Nevertheless, I shall make many trips to the river and watch with eyes watering from the wind, trying to be the first in the vicinity to report the Bald Eagle. With pride I am content to be a bird-watcher and not an ornithologist.



AMERICAN GOLDEN-EYE
From a drawing by Earnest W. Steffen

COLOR AND PATTERN

By F. L. R. ROBERTS, M.D.

SPIRIT LAKE, IOWA

(Photos by the author; published through courtesy of NATURE MAGAZINE)

Color is frequently important in the life of a bird. Sometimes its color helps to protect it from enemies. Sometimes it helps find a mate or preserve a "territory." But in many, or perhaps most, cases we don't understand why birds are colored as they are.

Abbott H. Thayer was an artist as well as a naturalist. He is given credit for many of the early contributions to our understanding of the significance of color. While studying how to paint objects on a flat canvas and give them the appearance of solidity, he discovered some of the ways in which a bird's color may help to conceal it.

If you wish to draw a ball, you don't just draw a circle and make it all the same color. It would look like a flat disk if you did. You must shade it to give it the appearance of a sphere. If the light is mainly from above as it is out-of-doors, you shade the lower part. If shading the lower part of a disk would make it appear to be a ball, Thayer reasoned that counter-shading a real ball would make it lose its appearance of solidity. He experimented and it turned out that his reasoning was correct.

He made a model of a bird and covered it with gray flannel. He placed this model against a piece of the same flannel, out-of-doors and with the light coming mainly from the sky. Even though they were the same color, the model was distinctly visible. He then painted the top of the model darker and gradually shaded it until, half way down, it was the same color as the background flannel. Then he started on the underparts with much lighter paints and gradually shaded as he went upward until, at the halfway mark, it was again the color of the background. He put the model in front of the flannel background again and now it was practically invisible from a few feet.

Thayer demonstrated before a meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union. He placed a gray blanket near the back of the stage. A wire was strung between two chairs in front of the blanket. On the wire were thread-



YOUNG KILLDEERS IN NEST



HARRIS'S SPARROW

ed some potatoes, lighted mainly from above. When he asked how many potatoes there were, they said, "Three." He then reached to where there was apparently nothing on the wire, made a turn with his hand, and the group was surprised to see that at that place also there was a potato. It had been invisible because it was counter-shaded—darker above and lighter below. When he turned it over so that the lighter part was uppermost and received the most light, it was plainly visible.

Most birds have much lighter underparts and this may contribute greatly to making them harder to see. The Spotted Sandpiper and many other birds have even the lower mandible lighter colored than is the upper one.

Mr. Thayer discovered a number of other reasons why some birds are hard to see even though they are conspicuously marked. Experimenting with the model bird which he had counter-shaded, he placed it before a background on which were painted many short black lines of different lengths and running in many directions. The model, even though it was counter-shaded, showed up plainly against this background. He then made another model and marked it with short black lines as he had the background. This was also plainly visible. But when he employed both counter-shading and mimetic marking the model was practically invisible.

You have noticed that ground-dwelling birds often have a pattern of stripes somewhat resembling the reeds and grass among which they dwell. The American Bittern frequently stands with its head, neck and bill all pointed upward in a straight line and is less conspicuous in that position than when it assumes a horizontal posture. Owls are often seen in trees and brush and their transverse barring mimics the dark branches and shadows cast by the branches. Nestling owls, however, do not have this protective barring nor counter-shading. Many of them live in holes in trees where they do not need it.

Even the red patches on the shoulders of a Red-winged Blackbird might have protective value as they could be mistaken for flowers against a background of black mud, when seen from far above by a predatory hawk. It is more likely that they serve their most important purpose by being conspicuous. Thus they call attention to the fact that a specific location has been preempted as the bird's nesting and feeding territory. The female Red-wing, however, resembles the grass and weeds of her habitat.

Do you know that shadows on the snow, when there is a blue sky overhead, are likely to be sky-blue instead of gray? To verify this, look at some of your natural color photographs or place a bit of mirror in the shadow



YOUNG SHRIKES

in such a position that it mirrors the sky. Under such conditions even the bright blue of the Blue Jay might be very inconspicuous.

"Ruptive" or "secant" designs are markings that tend to break up the outline of the bird into unbirdlike shapes. Notice how the baby Kildeers' markings make them inconspicuous. The black face and bib of Harris's Sparrow is also a ruptive pattern.

The eye of a bird is a particularly bright spot, for it catches and reflects light. It is partly hidden in some birds by a black patch, as in the Northern Yellow-throat and Migrant Shrike. Many birds do not have this protective patch, however.

Longitudinal striping often helps to conceal the fact that an animal is moving forward among stones and vegetation. This is particularly true of many snakes. The white rump or strongly marked tail of a bird may occasionally serve to make a predatory hawk or owl strike too far back. This does not seem to explain the white rump of a Marsh Hawk, however. When



SORA RAIL BABIES

longitudinal barring of the body is combined with a conspicuously marked tail, it might be particularly effective in deluding a predator.

Juvenile birds are not as fast to escape and have no need of acquiring a mate or defending a territory as do adults. They are often more protectively marked than are the adults of the same species. Young Robins and Blue-birds retain the spotting that must have been, in the past, the badge of all thrushes.

It is interesting to compare the coloration of young Coots and rails. Both are marsh-nesting birds. The rails inhabit higher rushes and cattails while Coots are prone to live where there are lower growing marsh plants some of which have brightly colored flowers. Young Coots have bright orange and red on their heads but young rails are black all over.

Many male birds are more brightly colored than are the females. If a female is found on duty at the nest it might deprive the race of the adult and several offspring. Males do less of the incubating and brooding and are less likely to bring catastrophe to the young if they are discovered by predators. A bright colored male may even lead an enemy away from the nest. In many cases the bright colors serve, as does the song, to make them conspicuous and call attention to the fact that a specific territory has been preempted.

I do not mean that all colors have any known value to their possessors. Watermelons are counter-shaded, and violets, which are cleistogamous, are conspicuously colored. But if occasionally for a few seconds, a color or pattern is beneficial it may serve to perpetuate the life of an individual and so have evolutionary value.

THE MATTER OF SUBSPECIES: A PROTEST BY A FIELD STUDENT OF BIRDS

By WILLIAM YOUNG WORTH
SIOUX CITY, IOWA

During and since World War II, more and more people have turned to nature study, and to bird study in particular, because they want to get outdoors, breathe fresh air, and see how nature operates. Many turn to photographing birds. Others enjoy birds for aesthetic reasons, impressed by the beauty of a bird's plumage or the loveliness of its song. Still others like to study the habits and home life of the birds. The first thing they usually do is to get a couple of bird books from the public library, then a pair of field glasses or binoculars. Soon they break through the shell of bird study and their troubles begin.

Out here in the upper Missouri River valley we have a vast overlapping of species, to say nothing of the so-called sub-species. Our budding bird student goes out on a field trip and sees a Blue Jay. A Blue Jay should be a Blue Jay, but our student turns to his bird book and finds that through this Missouri Valley area, there are supposed to live the Northern Blue Jay and the Western Blue Jay. When he works up his notebook list for the day, our budding birdman is befuddled at once—should he list the former Blue Jay or the latter? If the truth were known, the trained taxonomist (the gentleman who splits up these species of bird life) just from that actual seeing of the Blue Jay in the field with our neophyte, wouldn't know which Blue Jay he was seeing either. He couldn't tell the two apart in the field even with the best binoculars and would have to make a wild guess as to the subspecific identity.

The above experience can occur many times during the course of a day's field trip in this area. We supposedly have a Black-capped Chickadee and

a Long-tailed Chickadee in this area. They are one and the same bird. The late Dr. Myron H. Swenk, of the University of Nebraska, hadn't been able to pin down many Long-tailed Chickadee specimens for this region, and he asked the author if he would be kind enough to collect a few winter residing chickadees for measurement. These winter birds were collected and sent to Dr. Swenk. He later reported that not a single bird had come up to the supposed measurements of the Long-tailed Chickadee.

The classic example of the supposedly determined ranges of these above subspecies was uncovered many years ago by Aretas A. Saunders, when he was working up his fine book on the Birds of Montana. The Long-tailed Chickadee was given as the common chickadee for the state of Montana, yet away off in the extreme northwest corner of that vast state, pops up a form of Black-capped Chickadee which is the same in measurements and coloration as chickadees found on the Atlantic seaboard, nearly a continent away.

Our novice bird student has to decide between the Brown Thrasher and the Western Brown Thrasher; the Olive-backed Thrush and the Western Olive-backed Thrush; the Migrant Shrike and the White-rumped Shrike; the Eastern Warbling Vireo and the Western Warbling Vireo, etc. The list could be extended into pages, and all the while our student is struggling with identifications of small birds or wary birds, which are difficult in themselves, without having to clutter his mind with a lot of unnecessary subspecies which will never mean anything in his normal lifetime anyway. Why not let the poor, bewildered student enjoy his work with species of birds, instead of burdening him with endless subspecies? These subspecies often confuse the experts, when they are frank enough to admit it, as is illustrated below.

Taverner, in the "Birds of Churchill, Manitoba," says that both the White-crowned Sparrow and the so-called Gambel's Sparrow breed in that area, and that numerous other White-crowned Sparrows seemed to be mixtures of the above two forms. Taverner seemed to be uncertain of the status of Gambel's Sparrow (subspecies). Reading between the lines, it would appear that he would have liked to call all the above mentioned sparrows just White-crowned Sparrows and have forgotten the whole mess. In passing I would like to state that I am strictly an amateur student of birds and couldn't call myself by the title of ornithologist, and that I long since gave up trying to determine whether a White-crowned Sparrow was perhaps the so-called Gambel's Sparrow. I have failed to see the importance of such a determination and would rather spend the time, which might be wasted on the above activity, in running down some other bird probably rare to the vicinity the finding of which would add to the joy and pleasure of the field trip. Taverner also mentioned that two forms of the common Horned Lark, the so-called Northern Horned Lark and the so-called Hoyt's Horned Lark seemed to mate indiscriminately in the Churchill area. Given time, the taxonomists will probably come up with another new subspecies of Horned Larks from the above Hudson Bay region.

The late Dr. T. C. Stephens published an article, "The Taxonomic Unit," in the Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science, Vol. XXVII, 1920. The following pertinent observations are quoted therefrom: "When a group has been pretty thoroughly worked over for all the subspecies it will yield there will be nothing left for taxonomists to do but to make further revisions with the admission of hypersubspecies to be designated in tetranomials and so on One is led to wonder whether such practice is designed to further the ends of science, or to furnish occupation Simple binomial nomenclature permits the designation of subspecific forms (i.e., varieties) where necessary in biological investigation, by use of the term 'variety' By this method no attempt is made to establish a new unit, and yet provides a means of dis-

inction where such is needed. By it incipient species may be recognized without jeopardizing the usefulness of the specific unit. In other words we would return to the *status quo* prior to the use of the trinomial system."

In carrying Dr. Stephens' argument a little further, it appears that fully 90 percent of our bird students are strictly amateurs and will always remain as such. With that in mind it would appear that a small minority of experts, taxonomists, scientists and what have you are controlling the study of bird-life and setting it up as they want it set up. The result is a nomenclatural system (unnecessary subspecies) which is in chaos and confusion. To be specific, the writer once made an extended trip to California and naturally studied birds, but to his dismay he found that some of the birds he knew in the mid-west even had their names changed when they were found in California. The experts had chopped up the common species of Song Sparrow into so many subspecies they were almost on a county basis. There were so many subspecies of this one bird given that actually when one got into another county he usually found the Song Sparrow given under another name. This splitting and re-splitting of species of bird life has gone especially rampant on the Pacific Coast and as yet there is no end in sight, as Dr. Stephens predicted in the above quotations.

With passing years it is becoming increasingly difficult for the strictly amateur bird student to obtain a scientific collecting permit, if his inclinations are to try to clear up a little of the confusion that exists in his study of birds. Some western states refuse permits to even qualified federal biologists. Others set the fee so high that unless you live in the state, the cost of transportation to and from the state would be a costly item. So it seems that the field of scientific collecting will soon be left to a select few from the larger museums.

In publishing bird articles, the amateur bird student will often find that the editor of a publication will take it upon himself to add trinomial nomenclature to every species that the author has mentioned. Few bird study publications deviate from this above mentioned practice and those that do are to be highly commended. Again quoting from Dr. T. C. Stephens, Iowa Academy of Science Vol. XXV, 1918.; "In a great many cases the subspecies which have been recognized have little or no biological significance. In many cases, also, even the taxonomist cannot determine the subspecies without the knowledge of its locality It may be a debatable question whether trinomial nomenclature and the further splitting of species can contribute to the advancement of science, rather than to its embarrassment."

In closing, this writer would like to reiterate that we should have our ornithology so set up for the amateur, when he sees a House Wren he can put down House Wren and not have to bother about whether it was an Eastern or a Western House Wren; should he feel so inclined, even let him call it a Jenny Wren, if it will increase his interest in bird study.

A final example is given to emphasize that birds of a species vary as much as people of a certain race. During the past summer, a pair of House Wrens nested in a neighbor's yard. The male was of the lighter grayish color, supposedly colored like the Western House Wren, but the female was dark with a rich brown coloration on the back. However, according to the bird books the Western House Wren is supposed to be the nesting form in the upper Missouri River valley. Yet here was a dark-colored bird, which is supposed to typify the Eastern House Wren, mated with the light-colored wren. Some of their offspring will probably be collected one of these days and we shall have a new subspecies of House Wren for this region. It may as well be labeled the Nebiasod House Wren for all the good it will do to promote better bird work in this great inland empire of ours, the upper Missouri River valley.

THE WINTER FOOD OF SOME LONG-EARED OWLS

By THOMAS MORRISSEY

DAVENPORT, IOWA

On January 30, 1949, the writer located a roost of Long-eared Owls (*Asio otus wilsonianus*) at Duck Creek Park, Davenport, Iowa. The roost was located in an evergreen plantation about 250 yards long and 150 yards wide bordered on both sides by deciduous woodlands. There were several dense stands of white pines (*Pinus strobus*) and Norway pines (*Pinus resinosa*) alternating with scattered spruces and cedars. The owls roosted in the upper branches of the white pines particularly in those trees which were concealed by the denser foliage of adjoining Norway pines. Two different roosting sites were in use and these were separated by a distance of about 100 yards.

The roosts were visited weekly from February 1 until April 12, 1949, and thereafter at irregular intervals until May 15, 1949. During the first weeks of February, six owls were using the roost; during late February and early March from three to five were seen weekly with the average number being four. After the middle of March, two or rarely three owls could be found at each visit. Visits were curtailed during April and May in hope that the two birds present could be induced to nest in the area. Until late April a pair of birds was almost always present, but by the early part of May no owls could be found in the vicinity.

The owls were quite shy. Their perfect concealment among the evergreens made it impossible to locate the roosting birds and when they flushed, as they invariably did when the observer was within 10 yards, they flew into the adjoining woodlands for distances up to a quarter of a mile. Birds which were frightened from the roost during the daytime did not return during the daylight hours.

The ground beneath the roosts was littered with the regurgitated pellets of the owls. Three hundred of these pellets were collected between February and March and their contents were examined to determine the principal food of these owls during the winter months. Scott, (The Auk, Vol. 65, No. 3, 447-448, 1948) collected 55 pellets from a roost which had been in use by two owls for at least 10 days. Other information on captive owls indicates that one or two pellets are regurgitated by a well-fed owl every day. Even if the maximum number of owls observed (6) had been present continually, the great accumulation of pellets would represent food taken as far back as the preceding December.

The major food items of these Long-eared Owls as determined by the analysis of the pellets were as follows:

White-footed Mouse (<i>Peromyscus</i> spp.)	140 skulls	(51%)
Meadow Mouse (<i>Microtus</i> spp.)	111 skulls	(41%)
Short-tailed Shrew (<i>Blarina brevicauda</i>)	7 skulls	(+2%)
Harvest Mouse (<i>Reithrodontomys</i> sp.)	7 skulls	(+2%)
House Mouse (<i>Mus musculus</i>)	5 skulls	(-2%)
Little Shrew (<i>Cryptotis parva</i>)	1 skull	(-1%)

The *Peromyscus* skulls fell into two size ranges which probably correspond to the two subspecies of the white-footed mouse found in this locality: *P. leucopus noveboracensis* and *P. maniculatus bairdi*. No attempt was made to separate the two forms. Both are numerous in all habitats surrounding the roost. The large number of meadow mouse remains indicates that the Long-eared Owl hunts over open meadow land more than was at first expected. The most unusual remains were those of harvest mouse which were found in numbers equal to those of the short-tailed shrew. The writer has done some collecting of small mammals in the Davenport area and has always found

the shrew to be very common in a wide variety of habitats. The harvest mouse, however, has been taken only once. From the evidence of the pellets it seems probable that the harvest mouse is fairly common but for some reason (probably because of the bait used) is not likely to fall victim to the collector's traps. The presence of the rather rare little shrew had long been suspected in this area, but the skull found in the pellet is our first actual evidence.

It is interesting to note that no birds occurred in this fairly large sampling. Cardinals, Juncos, and Tree Sparrows were abundant in the vicinity of the roosts. Birds constituted 5% of the food items of the same species of owls studied by Scott (op. cit.). Two Long-eared Owls which the writer collected near McCausland, Scott County, Iowa, on January 10, 1939, had eaten 2 Juncos each in addition to an undetermined number of meadow mice.

The writer is indebted to Dr. Thomas G. Scott of the Iowa Wildlife Research Unit at Ames, Iowa, for identification of the *Cryptotis* skull.

THE USE OF THE COMMON BULL THISTLE AS A NESTING PLANT BY SONGBIRDS

By EMMETT B. POLDERBOER

Loras College
DUBUQUE, IOWA

A number of undesirable weedy plants provide choice nesting cover for many species of insectivorous and seed-eating songbirds. Such low-growing, weedy shrubs as elder (*Sambucus*), gooseberry (*Ribes*), and briar (*Smilax*) are used extensively but are seldom disturbed by cutting and spraying during the nesting season. The common bull thistle, *Cirsium lanceolatum* (L.) Hill, is used to a large extent by birds partial to pasture, roadside and hayland habitat. This thistle is common along railroad right-of-ways, highways, fence rows and open pastures. It is subjected to weed control measures more than any other nesting weeds and thus the aesthetic interests of bird lovers are sacrificed to the more practical interests of farmers and road maintenance crews.

During the past 20 years I have noted the preference for bull thistles by small birds of the open lands. In mid-June and early July Dickcissels are found nesting in thistle clumps. In northern Grundy County I once found 8 Dickcissel nests in 10 rods of fence line overgrown with thistles. In addition to these a Yellow Warbler nest and a Northern Yellow-throat nest, each parasitized by cowbirds, were also found. Since most of the land around this place was relatively clean-farmed, an unusual concentration of birds apparently was attracted to this small island of nesting cover.

Although dense stands of thistles seem to be most attractive to nesting birds, I have often found nests in isolated thistles in open pasture and hay fields. Most of the young of Dickcissels, Yellow-throats and Yellow Warblers mature and leave the nests without harm since farmers seldom concentrate on weed-control activities until after oats are harvested in late July. Other thistle-nesters that do suffer more from weed destruction are Red-wing Blackbirds, Chipping Sparrows and Goldfinches. The Red-wings and Chipping Sparrows often are affected by haying and harvest when they nest in isolated thistles growing in oat and timothy fields. The Goldfinch appears to suffer far more than other species from post harvest weed control. Large numbers of Goldfinches nest in August when the thistles have gone to seed and thistle down is available for nest linings. It is during the height of Goldfinch incubation that most thistles are destroyed.

In August of 1949 I found a large concentration of Goldfinch nests along the Illinois Central right-of-way at Dyersville. There were nests at an average of one to every three rods for a distance of 60 rods. On August 21 the thistles were cut and only four broods out of 20 escaped before the cutting commenced. At this time only three nests had not completed incubation, and the remainder of the nests contained young birds in various stages of development. A few of the more advanced ones survived after the cutting but only one or two members of some of these advanced broods appeared to be getting parental attention.

Goldfinches are still abundant but it is an unnecessary waste of wildlife to destroy them in large numbers at the height of the nesting season. Perhaps mowing of thistles in mid-July would result in less loss of fledgling Goldfinches and allow more nesting adults to seek shrubs or weeds in other locations less likely to be affected by weed-control during the height of the nesting season.

CONCERNING MONGREL SLATE-COLORED JUNCOS

By WILLIAM YOUNGWORTH
SIOUX CITY, IOWA

After nearly 30 years of field work during the course of which the writer has seen thousands of Slate-colored Juncos in migration and in their summer homes in Minnesota and Canada, some very definite conclusions have been drawn as to the mixing of the junco species.

It is not unusual during the season to see Juncos with black heads and chestnut backs, gray heads and chestnut backs, pink sides, and some of such a very light gray they cause one to take several looks. But all through this gamut of color, the birds are still Slate-colored Juncos or variants thereof. Now for the name of Shufeldt's Junco. This name seems to enchant bird students, for they wander through the woods in fall and see one of the above color variations of the common junco; soon a record may be published of another Shufeldt's Junco for Iowa or this general region. The great majority of these records are sight records, which the experts agree are unreliable in the field due to slight color differences between hybrid Slate-colored Juncos and other western forms.

The late Dr. T. C. Stephens and the writer were together in the field many times, and we never could understand how other bird students might identify the Shufeldt's Junco, Montana Junco, or Pink-sided Junco in the field. We saw hordes of off-colored Slate-colored Juncos and in the early years indulged in some collecting, but our findings never proved much beyond our earlier contentions.

In referring to literature we find that back in 1908, two specimens of the so-called Shufeldt's Junco were taken in southeastern Missouri and identified by the authority, Dr. J. Dwight. These birds were later re-examined by Dr. Oberholser and Mr. J. T. Zimmer and found to be common Slate-colored Juncos. Later Dr. Oberholser examined a junco specimen taken by Salyer in western Missouri and declared it definitely Shufeldt's Junco and the first record for the state. This record will be discussed later.

In the "Birds of Minnesota" we find a very interesting discussion of the status of Shufeldt's, Montana, Oregon and Slate-colored Juncos. Dr. T. S. Roberts, the author, sent a selection of oddly marked juncos to Dr. Jonathan Dwight, probably because Dr. Roberts thought he might have specimens of the three first named juncos, which would be new birds for the state of Minnesota. Perversely the results were discouraging, to say the least, and the resulting remark by Dr. Dwight is a gem of a witticism: "A fine lot of mon-

grel Juncos you have sent me." The good Doctor went over the specimens and came up with the decision that all the juncos were intermediates between full species—hence hybrids and were mainly variants of the Slate-colored Junco.

In summing up the case of the Shufeldt's Junco and other extra-limital juncos sometimes said to be found in this area, it must be repeated that often the expert on species and so-called subspecies cannot determine the subspecies without the exact knowledge of the location where the specimen was collected. Often the decision of the expert that this is such-and-such a subspecies is made alone on his individual opinion, with not enough emphasis given to the whole picture. Thus we find that Oberholser and Zimmer shelved Dr. Dwight's identification of Shufeldt's Junco from Missouri, then Oberholser identifies his own Shufeldt's Junco from Missouri. Now we know both of them were wrong and that Shufeldt's Junco should never have been included in the bird lists of the Minnesota-Iowa-Missouri region. Shufeldt's Junco is now known to be a resident of the extreme coastal regions of Oregon, Washington and California. Any occurrence of this junco in this region has been a mis-identification of our common-Slate-colored Junco in his many-hued coat.

BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

At the fall meeting held at Winthrop, Fred Hall, chairman of the 1950 convention committee for the Davenport meeting next May, offered to sponsor a contest of snapshots of bird life. Pictures may be either black and white or in color, but must have been taken by the person who enters the picture in the contest. Contestants shall belong either to a local club or to the Iowa Ornithologists' Union.

CONTEST RULES

There shall not be more than two classes or groups. Class I is for all people 18 years of age or older. Class II is for youth under 18 years. If there are less than four contestants in either class, the contest shall be grouped in one class.

All pictures must be mounted on cardboard with the name of the contestant on the back.

Contestants must send all pictures to Fred T. Hall, c/o Davenport Public Museum, Davenport, Iowa, by May 1, 1950. Write to Mr. Hall for your entry blank between January 1 and April 1, 1950.

Prizes will be offered as follows: 1st prize in each class will be a two-year subscription to "Iowa Bird Life"; 2nd prize, a one-year subscription. If there are contests in both classes, a sweepstakes prize of \$2.00 will be offered.

The contest committee to work with Mr. Hall will be: Albert C. Berkowitz, Mrs. Robt. Ruegnitz, Mrs. A. T. Lambert and Dr. Robt. Vane.—RALPH W. JOHNSON, President.

GENERAL NOTES

Lazuli Bunting at Newton.—On May 13, 1949, Bob Little and I were hiking about two miles from Newton on the Green Castle road. We were viewing a Dickcissel and a Red-winged Blackbird which were sitting between two fence posts, when a blue-colored bird landed between them, in plain view and in easy range of our binoculars. Naturally, our first thought was, "Ah, a Bluebird also." But the thought had hardly time to crystallize in that split-second before I was stammering out, "No, no, it's a Lazuli Bunting!" Sure enough, it was, though it is an accidental migrant in Iowa and rare this far east.—JOHN PAUL MOORE, Newton, Iowa.

Least Bittern Nests in Johnson County.—For the last several years, Least Bitterns have been a special interest at Swan Lake, a public shooting ground in Johnson County. They have been a late migrant, putting in their appearance the middle of May, our first dates being around May 18. From then on through the summer months they can always be flushed from the vegetation of the lake or can be seen flying low over the burr reed or pickerel weed which grows so abundantly in this muskrat slough. We knew that probably two or three pairs nested in this 44-acre lake, but it wasn't until this year that a nest was found. Instead of being in the cattails, as is so frequently noted in the literature, a small platform was discovered on June 5 suspended in the burr reeds over a foot of water.

On June 15 I made a trip to the area and confirmed my original guess as to the identity of the nest, finding it to be truly a Least Bittern's nest with four white eggs present. A blind was set up and on June 19 motion pictures were taken of both sexes incubating the eggs. The male apparently spent the night on the nest with the female taking his place at 8:30 a.m. The incubation period has been given in literature as 16 to 17 days. And so on June 29 I was back in the blind at 5 a.m. to photograph the brooding parents with the four young bitterns, one of which had hatched that very morning. Feeding by regurgitation was photographed, as well as greeting ceremonials of the sexes at the nest which consisted of crossing bills and pecking.

Three young were still in the nest on July 4 which I believe was their last day as nestlings, because, as the reeds were parted to let in the necessary light for photography, they scrambled out of the nest back into the shadows. This would set their probable time spent in the nest as only seven days. Though the young were not marked, I feel that the fourth or last to hatch did not survive.—ROBERT F. VANE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Observations in Scott County in 1949.—

SNOWY EGRET. Two birds were seen and studied by members of the Tri-City Bird Club, August 6, 1949. The short wing span, small size, blackish bill with yellow base, black legs and yellow feet were all noticed. The same day four birds dropped within 60 feet of where I was standing on the edge of Nobis slough; very apparent were the yellow feet and black legs.

LITTLE BLUE HERON. Four immature birds of this species were seen at Credit Island on August 13. Fred T. Hall and Hugo H. Schroeder were with me and established the identity of the birds.

DUCK HAWK. This bird was seen May 5, by Thomas Morrissey and I while it was attacking a large group of shorebirds frequenting a pond west of McCausland, Iowa. The hawk singled out one bird for its prey and while chasing it afforded an excellent opportunity for both observers to note these characteristics: slaty-blue back, sharply-pointed wings, long tail, and dark "side-burns" on the head. It uttered no call and swiftly flew away after its unsuccessful attack.

VIRGINIA RAIL. One bird seen at Grant slough, August 28, while I was in company with James Hodges.

GOLDEN PLOVER. These birds were seen on the pond mentioned above, west of McCausland. Thomas Morrissey first noted them May 1 when he counted 50 birds. On May 5, only one bird remained after the Duck Hawk episode, and May 7 there were 12.

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER. Seven birds seen May 22, on same pond.

UPLAND PLOVER. Although a rare migrant in previous years, numerous records of the Upland Plover were recorded this season.

Near the Victor Animatograph plant west of Davenport: June 18, one; June 23, four; July 10, ten; July 11, one.

About ten miles northwest of Davenport: June 24, one; June 26, six; July 29, eight.

West of McCausland, Iowa: July 31, two.

Mount Joy Airport: August 28, three.

WILLET. Thomas Morrissey observed one bird on the previously mentioned pond west of McCausland, May 1, 1949.

DOWITCHER. May 1, at the above mentioned pond, Thomas Morrissey saw four individuals of this species.

RED-BACKED SANDPIPER. McCausland pond on May 7, one bird identified by five observers including Fred Hall and Thomas Morrissey. May 27, two were seen on the mud bar of Credit Island Harbor by Fred Hall, Thomas Morrissey and the writer.

FRANKLIN'S GULL. One feeding in Credit Island Harbor June 18 and identified by members of the Tri-City Bird Club.

CLIFF SWALLOW. Has been frequently recorded in fall of 1949. Near Grant slough; about 25 on wires in group with Bank Swallows. July 23, northern Scott County, flocks numbering from 20 to 200 birds were seen. One immature female was collected. Near McCausland several were seen August 1.

PURPLE MARTIN. An all-white bird of this species was seen in the town of McCausland and studied through 6X glasses as it perched on a wire preening itself among others of its kind. The bill and feet were quite noticeably pink though the eyes appeared black; the plumage was snow-white.—RICHARD SCHAEFER, Davenport, Iowa.



ROBINS AT ROOST IN NEWTON, IOWA

This photograph was taken by flashbulb by John Paul Moore, on the Maytag property in southwest Newton, April 19, 1949, when a flock of more than 5,000 Robins settled down for the night. It is unusual for Robins to congregate in such large flocks during spring migration, for they usually go north in small groups, but bad weather probably blocked the progress of early birds and was responsible for this concentration in Newton. In addition to the large flock on the Maytag grounds, the Robins roosted in the Country Club area and other heavily wooded places in southwest Newton. The Robins roosted in a compact flock, and ten birds can be seen in this picture.

Information, Please!—Dr. George O. Hendrickson and I are making a study of the Bronzed Grackles, and especially the ecology of their roosts and roosting. We have been on this project since mid-August, 1949, and have gotten considerable information in Ames. To secure more information in the state, however we are asking Iowa Ornithologists' Union members the following questions:

Do you know of Bronzed Grackle roosts existing this past summer and fall? Where were they (county, township, town)?

About how large was the roost area (extent in city block or in acres)?

About how many birds were in the roost?

What kinds of trees were used chiefly?

For how many years has the roost been used?

Is there anything of special interest concerning this roost?

Please send any pertinent information to—JOHN C. W. BLIESE, Dep't. of Zoology and Entomology, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.

Unusual Nesting of the Flicker.—Dr. John B. Shackford, of Mount Vernon, called the writer's attention to a rather unusual nesting of the Northern Flicker in a small maple tree in the former's front yard. When this maple tree was quite young the top had apparently been broken off. As a result, the crown of the tree is made up entirely of branches that radiate out from the trunk about 13 feet from the ground. The broken portion of the trunk had subsequently rotted, thus leaving a vertical hole in the trunk 19 inches deep and 6-8 inches wide at the top. In this vertical hole a pair of Flickers had successfully nested. Dr. Shackford believed the young departed from the nest on June 25. The nesting hole was damp and soggy from recent rains when the writer inspected it, and indicated that the tree limbs overhead offered little protection.

Ornithological literature shows that the Flicker makes a rather wide choice of nesting sites. In this particular case the nesting pair apparently made no modification of the site selected.—J. HAROLD ENNIS, Mt. Vernon, Iowa.

Catbird and Timber Rattlesnake.—On July 15, 1949, while sitting on the porch of my house watching the antics of the birds at the bird bath, my attention was attracted by the continuous screaming of a Catbird. On turning around I saw a Catbird on the driveway in a very excited frame of mind. It was screaming in an agitated manner accompanied by continuous wing flashing. The attention of the bird was directed toward a hydrangea bush beside a cement walk to the driveway. The Catbird was about 4 feet from the bush and moving back and forth parallel to the bush.

Something was wrong, I knew, and what it was, the snake gave the answer by protruding his head from under the hydrangea bush, to be followed by enough of its body for me to tell that it was a timber rattlesnake. This was the signal for a run to the tool shed to get my hoe. While I did so the rattlesnake crossed the driveway onto the lawn, but it had no chance to get away as the Catbird was following and pointing to its location. In this the Catbird was being assisted by a Brown Thrasher. When I arrived with the hoe, both birds took their position on the rim of the bird bath about 12 feet away to watch the execution of the snake. In explanation of the rather close proximity of the birds, I would say that I have maintained my country place as a bird sanctuary and the birds have largely lost their fear of humans.

After killing the snake I left the body on the lawn. As usual with snakes, the body was still wriggling from involuntary muscular action. This created more bird excitement. The Thrasher and Catbird still stayed on the job and were joined by two Robins. The Robins persisted for some time in diving at the dead snake, swooping about 3 feet over the body. Another much excited

observer was a Warbling Vireo, which jumped about on a small tree limb above the dead snake and exhibited much agitation. A pair of Phoebe's had just hatched a family over my front door, and a pair of Least Flycatchers which had a nest on a tree limb beside the house were in the trees above where I killed the snake. During the intense bird excitement they complacently went about their business of catching insects and ignored the snake completely.

From this incident it appears that birds can recognize species of snakes that are predatory to them. Around my house there are many frogs. As a result I have a good supply of common and red-barred garter snakes. The presence of these snakes in the grass is completely ignored by the birds and there is no visible excitement when a garter snake is present.

It was with some pangs of conscience that I killed the most beautifully marked snake living in this vicinity. It was in the yellow color phase, which is the color phase of all female timber rattlers that I have seen in this vicinity; the length was 40 inches and the tail had seven rattles and a button. My conscience was somewhat mollified by the knowledge that I never kill a non-poisonous species of snake and also by the fact that this lady was not exactly a safe neighbor for my yard.—CHAS. A. STEWART, New Albin, Iowa.

Early Fall Migration Notes from the Sioux City Region.—Near freezing weather during late August of 1949 seemed to speed summer residents on their way more quickly than usual, as is seen in records given below. Last records: Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Sept. 11; Nighthawk, Sept. 12; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Sept. 5; Kingbird, Aug. 31; Arkansas Kingbird, Sept. 3; Wood Pewee, Aug. 31; Baltimore Oriole, Sept. 17; Chipping Sparrow, Sept. 22; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Sept. 15; Purple Martin, Sept. 15; Bank Swallow, Sept. 15; Red-eyed Vireo, Aug. 25; Bell's Vireo, Aug. 26; Brown Thrasher, Sept. 22. The only species staying late were: Chimney Swift, Oct. 18; Phoebe, Oct. 4, in Guthrie County; Indigo Bunting, Oct. 4, Springbrook Park, Guthrie County; Catbird, Oct. 4; House Wren, Oct. 11.

Below are given some fall arrival dates: Harris Sparrow, Oct. 4, Guthrie County; Tree Sparrow, Oct. 13; Slate-colored Junco, Oct. 4, Guthrie County; Lincoln Sparrow, Sept. 16; Nashville Warbler, Aug. 27; Orange-crowned Warbler was first seen on September 7 and almost daily thereafter until a cold wave hit us on October 22; Myrtle Warbler, Oct. 3; Palm Warbler, Oct. 5; Redstart, Sept. 7; Brown Creeper, Sept. 30, which is my earliest fall record in 25 years; Golden-crowned Kinglet, Oct. 15; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Sept. 24; Pied-billed Grebe, Oct. 14, on both Okoboji Lakes; Franklin Gull, Sept. 19, Ida County; while I was on a trip to visit a proposed Prairie Preserve on this date we found the ground planted to corn; Mallard, the first flock of 7 birds flew over on August 25; Canada Goose, the first flock of 15 flew over on Sept. 29 and the next flock of nearly 40 geese went over on Oct. 13; Blue and Snow Geese, a small flock on Oct. 22, near Farnhamville, which would put the record both in Calhoun and Webster Counties; Golden Plover, Oct. 14, two small flocks seen near Everly, Clay County, while on a trip checking on the prairie areas of Dickinson and Emmet Counties; Prairie Falcon, Aug. 31, one seen near town of Larrabee, Cherokee County, while on a trip to visit the Steele Bank Prairie, which we also found plowed up and planted to grain. The hawk migration was again poor and we listed only a few Red-tailed, Marsh, Cooper and Sparrow hawks for the early fall season.—WM. YOUNG WORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

Feral Nesting of the Rock Dove at Mount Vernon.—It may supplement a previous record (Iowa Bird Life, Vol. XIX, No. 1, p. 22) to note that three students, Ronald Gilbert, George Brighton, Paul Jacobson, and I on June 22, 1949, found a feral nesting of the Rock Dove in the small stone quarry at the

southeast edge of Mount Vernon, Iowa. Shortly after we arrived at the quarry it was noticed that three pigeons or Rock Doves appeared from a distance and came to rest on a dry portion of the quarry floor. They were joined almost immediately by a fourth bird that had suddenly appeared from a crevice in the rock wall. A few minutes later this fourth dove returned to its hiding place. Upon later examination we found a cleft in the quarry wall about 9 feet from the floor. This recess measured roughly 2 feet high, 1½ feet across, and 2 feet deep. Within it were a young dove and one mud-covered addled egg. No evidence of nesting materials was found, although it may have been washed out by recent rains.

It might be added that on June 29, Elwood Willey, George Brighton, Ronald Gilbert, and I visited the quarry at Stone City, west of Anamosa, Iowa. We counted 44 Rock Doves in the recesses of the quarry wall.—J. HAROLD ENNIS, Mt. Vernon, Iowa.

Notes from an Ames Yard.—We had a heavy rain on the night of September 10. Next day our yard was very quiet except for sparrows and one Cardinal that came in. The next night I went out and watched the Robins coming in for the night, and heard the Catbirds in the honeysuckles. For at least 15 years Robins have used my place as a "Robins' Roost"—not in the large numbers described by Bradford Torrey in "The Foot-path Way," but my garden can't compete with Boston!

On September 10 I saw a Hummingbird on the salvia. Brown Thrashers were last seen on Sept. 8. Tufted Titmice have, I suspect, been in Ames as long as I have, but I didn't meet them until 1920, but that was my fault. When we came in 1917, people made trips to West Woods to see a pair of Cardinals, but it was not long until they were common.

The Carolina Wren I met first in Des Moines County in about 1905. In 1920 a Mockingbird was about our place in Ames for five days. It was our first sight of the bird, and we sat about with bird books and looked at him through the glass as he fed at the window-shelf. In the middle '30's we identified both a Prothonotary Warbler and a Yellow-breasted Chat.—HARRIET C. BATTELL, Ames, Iowa.

The Iowa Bird List.—It was suggested in the September issue of "Iowa Bird Life" that there might be further comment on the list of Iowa birds printed as a supplement to the April, 1949, "Iowa Conservationist."

There are several classifications with which I disagree. Both the Killdeer and the Vesper Sparrow were given only as "common migrants", and both are common summer residents in this locality. The Mourning Warbler is given as an "uncommon migrant." In 14 years of keeping records I have never failed to see one or two in our grove on their way north; I also have fall records for some years. I wonder why more species weren't given the rating of "abundant summer resident," as was the Robin. Perhaps the Iowa Ornithologists' Union should prepare a list of Iowa birds of its own with a classification of each species.—PEARL KNOOP, Marble Rock, Iowa.

LOCAL BIRD CLUBS IN IOWA

NEWTON.—The activities of our club have been varied because we are a Bird and Nature Club. Therefore we have spent time this year in the field studying birds, trees, flowers, stars, rocks, minerals and insects. Some of the highlights of the past year were our participation in the State Convention, an over-night camping trip to the Missouri River bottoms to see and photograph the annual Blue Goose flight in March. There was also a geode and agate hike, which were very profitable, plus the fall get-together in Winthrop. We conduct the Christmas bird count, too, which all enjoy who have fortitude enough to take part in it.—JOHN PAUL MOORE.

WATERLOO.—The Waterloo Audubon Society started the new year with a potluck supper at the home of Grace Brainard on the evening of Oct. 25, with 27 members and guests present.

Pearl Rader is president of the club, and meetings will be held regularly on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Field trip activities during the coming year will be centered around the Crane Creek area under the leadership of Myrl Burk, vice-president.

The Waterloo and Cedar Falls Audubon Societies are again co-sponsoring Audubon Screen Tours, for the fourth season.—**MRS. JOHN BARLOW.**

GRINNELL.—The Grinnell Bird Club concluded its first year in May with a breakfast at Blue Point Woods about ten miles south of Grinnell. At the close of the year the club had 25 members.

One of the favorite spots for field trips during the past season has been Union Grove Lake, a game refuge, about 25 miles north of Grinnell, near Garwin. Many waterfowl and shore birds were studied at this lake.

Meetings were held monthly with movies or speakers for programs. Dr. H. S. Conard, formerly of Grinnell College and now connected with Iowa University, gave an interesting lecture on "Birds of Yellowstone." Dr. Conard was a guide in Yellowstone Park for a number of years.

One of our members, Miss Irene Cook, spent the summer at Hilltop Sanctuary near Walker, Minn., where her sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. P. A. Becker, maintain a sanctuary with over 200 bird nests. During their spare time the Beckers manufacture Bluebird, wren and Tree Swallow houses.

The present officers of the club are Robert Breiting, president; E. A. Kurth, vice-president; Miss Georgiana Holloway, secy.-treasurer.—**E. A. KURTH.**

DUBUQUE.—The Dubuque Audubon Club begins the year's activities with a potluck dinner at Eagle Point Park in September. This is always informal and the food bountiful. Summer experiences are discussed. The Club enjoys one other social event—the Christmas party. This year there is to be a turkey dinner at the home of Judge and Mrs. W. A. Smith.

Programs through the year are provided by different club members; one exception was a film on the development of the Lower Souris River valley district, shown last spring. For several years we have sponsored the Audubon Screen Tours and have found the project quite worthwhile, financially and otherwise.

This year the Club was host to the Iowa Ornithologists' Union convention at McGregor in May. Though McGregor is about 70 miles distant, we thought it was worth trying for the sake of getting into a different section where some birds not regularly seen in other parts of the state might be found.

The Christmas census is taken each year and sent to "Iowa Bird Life" and "Audubon Magazine." A spring all-day census is taken in May during warbler season.

Officers for the year are: George Crossley, president; Henry Herrmann, vice-president; Mary Young, secretary; Ival Schuster, treasurer; Mrs. R. S. Ruegnitz, program chairman.—**MARY YOUNG.**

1950 DUES NOW PAYABLE

Dues for 1950 are payable January 1st, and may be sent to Treasurer Serbousek, 1226 Second St. S.W., Cedar Rapids, Iowa, at any time. It will save time and postage if you will do this promptly and not wait for us to send you a notice.

CHRISTMAS REMINDER! A membership in the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, with its year's subscription to IOWA BIRD LIFE makes a very acceptable Christmas gift for a nature lover.

RECENT BIRD BOOKS

HAWKS ALOFT: THE STORY OF HAWK MOUNTAIN, by Maurice Broun (Dodd, Mead Co., New York, 1949; cloth, 8vo, pp. i-xvii & 1-222, with 11 photographs; price, \$4.00).

One has only to read the section, "Iowa Bird Students on Vacation", in the September issues of "Iowa Bird Life" to realize the extent of our members' travels each year to study birds during vacation days. Bird study is only incidental on some of the trips; on others bird work is the primary purpose and the entire itinerary is planned with bird-watching in mind. Our members' trips have taken them to nearly all the corners of the United States and to some regions outside, but we don't recall that anyone has as yet spent a vacation at Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania.

This mountain region was long infamous as a slaughter area for the thousands of hawks that chose the mountain ridge as part of their migration route. Gunners formerly congregated on Hawk Mountain during the best flights of the raptors and had poured a murderous barrage of lead into the birds as they attempted to pass.

Due to the efforts of bird students and conservationists, and particularly to Mrs. C. N. Edge who headed the movement, the slaughter was stopped and the region became a wonderful place for bird observation, where the hawks now have protection. Somewhat more than a decade ago, when funds were being solicited for the purchase of the area, the Iowa Ornithologists' Union made a contribution which paid for a little over an acre of ground. It was a small bit in a wide-flung campaign, but as an organization we have a very definite interest in Hawk Mountain.

Mr. Broun's new book is very interesting reading and is one of the great stories of conservation of the present day, telling in vivid style how a dream to save a persecuted family of birds was finally made to come true, how the public was awakened and funds were raised, how the many obstacles were surmounted, with the final fruition of seeing the area made a fine wildlife sanctuary to which nature lovers now journey from all parts of the United States and from countries beyond both oceans.

The mountaintop near Hamburg in central Pennsylvania, already famous, is destined to become much more famous, for here may be seen one of the most spectacular sights in modern ornithology, particularly in the fall when many thousands of hawks of various species, eagles and other birds pass over or near the ridge in their migration.

Mr. Broun writes very entertainingly of his many experiences during the years that he and his wife have had charge of the Hawk Mountain sanctuary. The book is filled with personal anecdotes and of descriptions of the various hawk species that are found there. Included is a good deal of material on flora and fauna, as well as notes on the natural phenomena of the region. There is the personal thread of life on a lonely mountainside through the entire year, often enlivened by adventure and humorous episodes, while the background of conservation and its manifold problems combine to make this an absorbing, serious narrative. It is the kind of book that one will put on the shelf beside Peterson's "Birds Over America," to read for pure enjoyment.—F. J. P.

THE CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

will be taken as usual between December 20 and 30. Study the form of censuses published in previous March issues and follow details carefully. List the birds in the A. O. U. order, giving exact number seen, and include data on hours, weather and ground conditions. Send your list to the Editor of "Iowa Bird Life" not later than January 15.

MEMBERSHIP ROLL OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION*

CHARTER MEMBERS (1923)

(H) Bailey, Mrs. Mary L. Sioux City	Palas, Arthur J., Postville
Battell, Mrs. F. L. Ames	Pierce, Fred J., Winthrop
Bennett, Walter W., Los Angeles, Calif.	Spiker, Chas. J., Branchport, N.Y.
Kinnaird, Mrs. W. A., West Des Moines	Wendelburg, Mrs. Toni R., Des Moines
Mills, Wier R., Pierson	Wolden, B. O., Estherville

MEMBERS

Adams, I. C. Jr., Columbia, Mo., 1941	Bordner, Mrs. Robt. I., Shenandoah, 1929
Alexander, Miss Pearl, Cedar Rapids, 1949	Boyd, Dr. and Mrs. Ivan L., Baldwin, Kans., 1937
Allert, Oscar P., McGregor, 1929	Breiting, R. A., Grinnell, 1949
Anderson, Dr. Rudolph M., Ottawa, Canada, 1942	Brooks, Frank G., Mt. Vernon, '45
(J) Armstrong, Joseph T., Omaha, Nebr., 1948	Brown, Mrs. Helen M., Des Moines, 1946
Austin, Mrs. E. J., Charles City, 1942	Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Woodward H., Des Moines, 1947
Austin, Dr. O. L., Tuckahoe, N. Y., 1931	Brunner, Miss Dorothy, Cedar Rapids, 1946
(S) Ayres, Charles C., Jr., Ottumwa, 1941	Brunner, Miss Marjorie, Cedar Rapids, 1946
Barlow, Mrs. John, Waterloo, 1942	Burk, Dr. Myrle M., Waterloo, 1949
(S) Bartlett, Wesley H., Algona, '35	Burroughs, Julian, West Park, N.Y., 1948
Bates, Curtis E., Rome, N.Y., 1946	Carl, Harry G., Davenport, 1948
Baumgartner, Miss Josephine, Des Moines, 1942	Carmichael, Miss Thelma, Tama, '46
Beckwith, Miss Alma, Atlantic, 1939	Carson, L. B., Topeka, Kans., 1949
(S) Berkowitz, Mr. and Mrs. Albert C., Des Moines, 1943 and 1947	(J) Carter, Dennis, Thor, 1947
Bibbee, P. C., Athens, W. Va., 1945	(S) Cedar Falls Audubon Club, Cedar Falls, 1947
(S) Bice, Mrs. Don C., Atlantic, '42	(C) Cedar Rapids Bird Club, Cedar Rapids, 1947
Binsfeld, Mrs. A. J., Des Moines, '47	Chadbourne, Miss Evelyn, Cedar Rapids, 1947
Birdsall, E. R., Emerson, 1947	Chadbourne, Dr. T. L., Vinton, 1938
(S) Birkeland, Henry, Roland, 1933	Chamberlain, Mrs. Florence C., Des Moines, 1947
Bishop, Dr. Louis B. Pasadena, Calif. 1934	Chapman, Herman F., Sioux Falls, S. Dak., 1948
Bixler, Mrs. Ingram, Cedar Rapids, 1944	Clampitt, Philip, Mt. Vernon, 1949
Bliese, John C. W., Ames, 1935	Clark, Mrs. Ella L., Burlington, '25
Blomstrand, Harry K., Fonda, 1946	(J) Clemons, Norval, Princeton, 1949
Bly, Mrs. Gordon, Parkersburg, '47	
Blythe, Miss Emma, Williamsburg, 1946	
Boggie, Rev. C. D., Tama, 1949	

*Complete to November 1, 1949. Year of joining the Union follows the name of each member. All cities are within Iowa unless otherwise noted. The following key letters are used in the list:

(C)—Contributing Member.
(H)—Honorary Member.
(J)—Junior Member.
(S)—Supporting Member.

- Confare, Miss Miriam, Cedar Rapids, 1942
- Connor, Mrs. Stephen, Sigourney '46
- Copp, Miss C. Esther, Wheatland, '33
- Crossley, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. E., Farley, 1948
- Crouter, Miss Frances, Cedar Falls, 1944
- Dales, Mrs. Marie, Sioux City, 1929
- Daum, Miss Wanda, Waterloo, 1947
- DeLong, Mrs. W. C., Lamoni, 1939
- Dickey, Miss Margaret, Cedar Rapids, 1946
- Dix, Mrs. Ray S., Cedar Falls, '35
- (S) Dorweiler, Miss Margaret, Cedar Falls, 1945
- Downing, Glenn R., Battle Creek, Mich., 1938
- Doyle, Bill, Grinnell, 1948
- Dragoo, Lavina, Cedar Rapids, '29
- Drury, Miss Eleanor, Davenport, '47
- Dubuque Audubon Club, Dubuque, 1933
- Dulany, David D., Clinton, 1949
- Dulany, Geo. W., Jr., La Jolla, Calif., 1943
- DuMont, Mrs. Janet, Des Moines, '27
- DuMont, Philip A., Washington, D.C., 1924
- (S) Dvorak, Joseph L., Chicago, Ill., 1947
- Eastman, Mrs. E. P., Burlington, '29
- Edgar, Mrs. G. P., Burlington, 1939
- Edge, Mrs. C. N., New York, N.Y., '31
- Edgerton, Ramona C., Red Oak, 1948
- (S) Eighme, Miss Marietta, Ottumwa, 1943
- Ennis, Mrs. Edna M., Tama, 1944
- (S) Ennis, Dr. J. Harold, Mt. Vernon, 1941
- Errington, Dr. Paul L., Ames, 1932
- Euwer, Archie N., Washington, 1947
- Farquhar, Catharine, Atlantic, 1946
- Faulkner, Geo. O., Waterloo, 1931
- Feeney, Rev. Thos. J., Davenport, 1947
- Field, H. P., Decorah, 1948
- Fitzsimmons, C. S., Sibley, 1945
- Flodin, Mrs. C. C., Cedar Rapids, '31
- Freeman, Earl, Winthrop, 1949
- Fritzsche, Carl R., Sioux City, 1946
- Funk, Ruth F., Independence, '40
- George, Graeme, Grinnell, 1949
- Giernot, Bruno B., Duluth, Minn., 1946
- Gillette, Mrs. Verla, Oskaloosa, 1949
- Glofelty, Miss Ila, Fairfield, 1945
- Goodman, John D., Ann Arbor, Mich., 1941
- Grant, Dr. Martin L., Cedar Falls, '37
- Greer, Rev. Edward C., Davenport, 1948
- Grummann, Mrs. Herbert R., St. Louis, Mo., 1943
- Guthrie, Richard A., Woodward, '39
- Hall, Fred T., Davenport, 1949
- Hallowell, Miss Loraine, Waterloo, 1932
- Hansman, Robt. H., Fort Madison, '48
- Hathorn, Glen M., Cedar Rapids, '34
- Hawk, Grover C., Indianola, 1944
- Hayette, Miss Verona, Cedar Rapids, 1943
- Hays, Russell M., Waterloo, 1947
- (J) Hazard, Norwood, Davenport, '47
- Hedges, Harold C., Kansas City, Kans., 1946
- Hendrickson, Dr. and Mrs. Geo. O., Ames, 1931 and 1944
- (S) Henning, Mrs. Tom, Decorah, '47
- Herrmann, Henry, Dubuque, 1945
- Heuer, Ralph, Davenport, 1940
- Heuser, E. P., Dubuque, 1940
- Hicks, Dr. Lawrence E., Columbus, Ohio, 1938
- Hillman, Mrs. Jay, Rockford, '44
- Hodges, James, Davenport, 1944
- Hopkins, Joseph W., Osage, 1947
- Hoskinson, Mrs. Helen H., Clarinda, 1940
- Hoyman, Miss Isabelle, Cedar Rapids, 1942
- Hoyt, Miss Elizabeth E., Ames, '48
- Independent School District, Davenport, 1949
- (S) Jaques, H. E., Mt. Pleasant, '47
- Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph W., Ames, 1939 and 1927
- Johnson, Waldo A., Grinnell, 1948
- Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Myrle L., Boone, 1931 and 1941
- Kalen, Wendell D., Ogden, 1949
- (S) Keck, Dr. Warren N., Naperville, Ill., 1936
- Keenan, Jim, Rippey, 1948
- Kent, Mrs. Wm., Cedar Rapids, '32
- (H) Keyes, Dr. Charles R., Mt. Vernon, 1944
- King, Mrs. Helen G., Grundy Center, 1933
- Knoop, Miss Pearl, Marble Rock, '37
- Kozicky, Edward L., Ames, 1949

- Kubichek, Wesley F., Alexandria, Va., 1941
 Kurth, E. A., Grinnell, 1946
 Laffoon, Jean L., Ames, 1940
 Lahr, Mrs. H. W., Storm Lake, '43
 Lambert, Mrs. Adaline T., Sioux City, 1940
 Laros, Jerry, Grinnell, 1947
 Laude, Dr. and Mrs. Peter P., Iowa City, 1942 and 1947
 Lawlor, Mrs. Gene, Victor, 1948
 Lawson, Miss Faye, Fairfield, 1945
 Leaverton, Mr. and Mrs. Paul, Indianapolis, 1948 and 1949
 (S) Lee, Miss Zell C., Sioux City, '43
 Leigh, Miss Grace D., Independence, 1945
 Loban, Miss Myra E., Waterloo, '38
 Loban, Miss R. Lucile, Waterloo, '38
 (S) Luckstead, David, DeWitt, 1946
 Luther, Mrs. J. S. Winthrop, 1946
 Lynch, Mrs. C. J., Cedar Rapids, '46
 MacMartin, Mrs. W. G., Tama, 1932
 McCabe, Miss Olivia, Des Moines, '32
 McCartney, Mrs. R. C., Charles City, 1942
 (S) McCutcheon, James W., Mt. Vernon, 1946
 McDonald, Malcolm, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1935
 McGuire, Uncas M., Creston, 1946
 Melcher, Rev. M. C., Lisbon, 1939
 (S) Meltvedt, Burton W., Paullina, 1931
 (S) Meyer, Dr. Alfred W., Cedar Rapids, 1942
 Miller, Dr. R. F., Baldwin, Kans. '49
 Millikin, Mrs. Forrest G., Sigourney, 1944
 Moore, Mr. and Mrs. John Paul, Newton, 1947 and 1949
 Morrissey, Thos. J., Davenport, '40
 Morton, Miss Thelma, Cedar Rapids, 1943
 Moser, Dr. R. Allyn, Omaha, Nebr., 1941
 Mote, Mr. and Mrs. G. A., Marshalltown, 1929
 Musgrove, Mr. and Mrs. Jack W., Des Moines, 1938 and 1943
 (J) Musgrove, Miss Jean, Des Moines, 1944
 Musselmann, Dr. T. E., Quincy, Ill., 1944
 Myers, Mrs. Len, Waterloo, 1939
 Nesetritl, Duane, Cedar Rapids, 1949
 Nichols, Harvey L., Waterloo, 1929
 Nickolson, Bob, Sioux City, 1949
 (J) Nomland, Knute, Iowa City, 1947
 Olinger, Miss Lucile, Toddville, 1947
 Ollivier, Roy, Mt. Pleasant, 1943
 Only, Frank, Los Gatos, Calif., '44
 Orr, Ellison, Waukon, 1935
 Osia, Miss Catherine, Humboldt, '46
 (J) Palas, Fritz R., Postville, 1949
 (J) Palas, Gretchen R., Postville, '49
 Palas, Mrs. Arthur J., Postville, 1949
 Parsons, Mrs. Robt. O. Dickens, 1942
 Partridge, Wayne F., Oskaloosa, 1949
 Pattee, Steven M., Cedar Rapids, '48
 Peahl, Arlen, DeWitt, 1946
 Peasley, Dr. and Mrs. Harold R., Des Moines, 1943 and 1934
 (S) Peel, Clarence O., Ft. Dodge, '41
 Peterson, Mrs. Ada, Grinnell, 1949
 Petranek, Mr. and Mrs. E. J., Cedar Rapids, 1931
 Pettingill, Dr. O. S., Northfield, Minn., 1937
 Pickering, Mrs. Lawrence J., Red Oak, 1946
 Pickering, Paul, Cedar Rapids, 1948
 Pierce, Robert A., Barlow, Miss., '41
 (J) Pike, Robert G., Coggon, 1947
 Pike, Walter E., Coggon, 1946
 Polderboer, Mr. and Mrs. Emmett B., Dubuque, 1948
 Pratt, John, Grinnell, 1948
 Prestegard, Miss Tillie, Mason City, 1945
 Purdy, Miss Ruth, Cedar Rapids, '43
 Rader, Pearl, Waterloo, 1949
 Rector, Harry E., Vinton, 1942
 Ressler, Miss Mildred E., Spirit Lake, 1949
 Reynolds, Miss E. Estella, Des Moines, 1943
 Richards, Miss Rose, Cedar Rapids, 1947
 Roberts, Dr. F. L. R., Spirit Lake, '24
 Roberts, Dr. Mary P., Spirit Lake, '26
 Robertson, Dr. C. W., Waterloo, 1947
 Rosenbaum, V. C., Denver, Colo., '48
 Rosene, Walter, Jr., Gadsden, Ala., 1942
 Ross, Hollis T., Lewisburg, Pa., '40
 Ruegnitz, Mrs. R. S., Dubuque, 1942
 Rugg, Mrs. Russell, Cedar Falls, '46
 (S) Ruhr, Eugene, Atlantic, 1941
 Sage, Evan, Waterloo, 1942
 Sage, J. R., Ames, 1947

- (H) Savage, David L., Mt. Pleasant, 1944
 Schaefer, Richard, Davenport, 1948
 Schaffner, Joseph, Mt. Pleasant, '48
 Schallou, Conard, Grinnell, 1949
 Schramm, Frank H., Burlington, '34
 Schuster, Miss Ival M., Dubuque, '41
 Schwanke, Mrs. Chas., Cedar Falls, 1948
 Scott, Dr. Thos. G., St. Paul, Minn., 1937
 (S) Serbousek, Miss Lillian, Cedar Rapids, 1931
 Shields, Mrs. David H., Grinnell, '46
 Shuttleworth, Miss Ann F., Cedar Rapids, 1947
 (S) Shuttleworth, Mrs. W. D., Sibley, 1945
 Smith, Dwight T., Boerne, Tex., '43
 Smith, Miss Irene M., Des Moines, 1943
 Smith, Mrs. Wm. Merwin, Milford, 1945
 Spohnheimer, Victor, Keokuk, 1947
 Statler, S. S., Mt. Pleasant, 1948
 Steffen, Earnest W., Cedar Rapids, 1942
 Stewart, Dr. Chas. A., New Albin, '44
 Stewart, Paul A., Westerville, Ohio, 1943
 (S) Stiles, Bruce F., West Des Moines, 1937
 Stoner, Emerson A., Benicia, Calif., 1946
 Stoner, Mrs. Lillian C., Albany, N.Y., 1945
 Strickland, J. W., Jr., Mt. Vernon, '45
 Sutton, Dr. Geo. M., Ann Arbor, Mich., 1941
 Tarr, Miss Margherita, Ames, 1946
 (S) Taylor, Mrs. H. J., Berkeley, Calif., 1939
 (J) Thomas, David, Grinnell, 1949
 Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. O. S., Rock Rapids, 1929
 Thornburg, Mrs. Ross J., Tucson, Ariz., 1937
 Tillapaugh, Miss Iola, Cedar Rapids, 1942
 Tobin, John, Vinton, 1938
 Tonkin, George, Monroeville, N.J., 1938
 (S) Tri-City Bird Club, Davenport, 1949
 Turnbull, Mrs. H. W., Diagonal, '44
 Turner, Richard, Iowa City, 1947
 Turner, Mrs. Stella, Clarinda, 1942
 (S) Vane, Dr. and Mrs. Robt. F., Cedar Rapids, 1940 and 1946
 Van Orsdol, Wilma, Cedar Rapids, 1949
 Ventura Consolidated School, Ventura, 1949
 Wartens, Miss Mary Ellen, Des Moines, 1946
 Weaver, Miss Gertrude S., Sioux City, 1946
 Weber, Alois John, Keokuk, 1929
 Williams, Chester W., Wellesley, Mass., 1946
 Willis, Miss Myra G., Cedar Rapids, 1940
 Wistey, Mrs. Lloyd, South English, 1942
 Wolden, Mrs. B. O., Estherville, 1939
 Wood, Miss Mary E., Ottumwa, 1945
 Wood, Miss Vida, Oskaloosa, 1949
 Young, Miss Katherine, Waterloo, '49
 Young, Miss Mary H., Dubuque, '40
 Youngworth, Wm. G., Sioux City, '26

LIBRARIES

- Carnegie-Stout Public Library, Dubuque, 1931
 Cornell College Library, Mt. Vernon, 1945
 Iowa State Traveling Library, Des Moines, 1940
 Kendall Young Library, Webster City, 1931
 Library, Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, 1939
 Library, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., 1931
 McGill University Library, Montreal, Que., 1932
 Public Library, Cedar Rapids, 1931
 Public Library, Council Bluffs, 1931
 Public Library, Davenport, 1947
 Public Library, Des Moines, 1931
 Public Library, Fort Dodge, 1936
 Public Library, Marshalltown, 1946
 Public Library, Sioux City, 1931
 State College of Washington Library, Pullman, Wash., 1945
 University of Illinois Library, Urbana, Ill., 1942